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AN ACCOUNT
OF
SOME PECULIAR MANNERS AND CUSTOMS
OF THE
PEOPLE OF BULL-LAND,
OR THE
ISLAND OF CONTRADICTIONS;

FAITHFULLY DETAILED
BY OLD HUBERT.

L O N D O N:

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

I. THE greatest wisdom is supposed by the inhabitants of this island to consist in the implicit admission of the most glaring contradictions.

II. Opinions, especially respecting mysterious matters are supposed to differ as much as countenances, and yet uniformity of opinion is required by the High Priests of Bull-Land.

III. A knowledge of the duties of man has in other countries been supposed to be necessary to the forming of a good Citizen, but the administrators of public affairs in Bull Land study to keep the poor in perfect ignorance, not so much as promoting any national establishment by which they may be even taught to read.

IV. Without a great degree of simplicity, and a perfect harmony in the principles of government, the sages of Bull Land say, a good government cannot exist. The government of Bull Land is, therefore, most mixed and complicated, and its very existence supposed to depend on a constant state of warfare between its respective parts.

V. The office of King is esteemed by the Bull-Landers so important and sacred, that it is a maxim with them that the King can never die——and yet all that is required of him, on the score of intellect, is, that he be not absolutely an idiot or a madman.

VI. Should the coffers of the King contain millions accumulated on millions, whilst a great part of the people are

starving

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starving, yet would the people labour and toil to add hundreds of thousands of pounds yearly to his enormous boards.

VII. Although the King is esteemed the protector, supporter and father of his people, he devours daily as much as would feed fifty thousand of his famishing children.

VIII. The office of King descends to the children of the monarch, and prudence dictates to them to secure the love and respect of the people, they, therefore, are sometimes—extravagant to a proverb, and indulge themselves in almost every species of luxury and debauchery.

IX. In other countries the most virtuous and good are esteemed the most high and illustrious, but in Bull-Land these titles are often bestowed on the most vicious and extravagant.

X. As the connection between a prince and his country cannot be too intimate, and as a good understanding between the parties is esteemed necessary to secure a blessing to the married state—the princes of the blood, in the Island of Contradictions, are always married to a foreigner, and frequently to one they have never seen.

XI. The first class of Citizens are distinguished by innumerable hereditary privileges, and among the rest, one by which they are enabled to gratify their most noble and pious dispositions, that of—running in debt with all the world, and paying nobody.

XII. The High Priests of Bull-Land manifest their piety by seldom appearing in the Temple, and their humility, by their princely incomes, lofty titles, and splendid palaces—whilst those who actually perform the sacred functions of the Temple starve with their families on a beggarly pittance; but for this apparent neglect they are supposed to be amply compensated by—being permitted to wear a white powder on their heads.

XIII. Contradictions pervade the performance of the most serious duties as well as the most frivolous amusements of the Bull-Landers. It is incumbent on the common people to perform a duty essential to the happiness of themselves and their children; to render it efficacious it should be performed at least once a year, they therefore think of it only once in seven years; and then, instead of accomplishing it with seriousness and attention, they immerse themselves in drunkenness and riot, and divert themselves with a most pitiful farce, in which a set of richly dressed, plump bearded speaking puppets are exhibited, as the exact pictures or representatives of the half-starved wretched people of Bull-Land.

XIV. The Bull-Landers are well satisfied that without the existence of harmony between the people and their spiritual pastors the people will never derive much benefit from their exertions. To increase, therefore, their affection and respect for the cloth they have a strange practice—every tenth blade of grafs or ear of corn is laid aside, with an execration, for the clergy.

XV. It is laid down, as an indisputable axiom, that the law should be administered without the least delay—but nothing is more common than for a lawsuit to last through two or three lives.

XVI. That the laws should be administered with the least possible expence all the sages do also agree, and yet it often happens that a man recovers a just debt by law and sets down a considerable loser, the expences of law having exceeded the sum he has recovered.

XVII. To acquire a knowledge of the laws of Bull-Land demands almost the whole study of a man's life, which indeed is not to be wondered at when we consider they are contained in upwards of forty folio volumes, and yet—ignorance of any one of these laws is not admitted as any excuse for its breach in the most unlettered clown.

XVIII. The certainty with which justice may be obtained is also allowed to be necessary to a proper administration of the laws, and such the Bull-Landers delight themselves with the reflection of being the case in Bull-Land—Nevertheless, the turn of a straw, or the mis-stroke of a pen, is known frequently to pervert the course of public justice in cases of the most important nature.

XIX. Tell an inhabitant of Bull-Land he is not as free as the air he breathes and 'tis probable he falls you to the ground by way of conviction; and yet, by the law of the land, he may, without even the imputation of any crime, but that of poverty, be ordered to confine himself to one particular spot where even the necessaries of life are out of his reach, a prison being immediately opened for his reception on his removal to a spot where bread is to be had.

XX. If any poor famishing Bull-Lander knock down a hare as it crosses the common path, and satisfies his hunger with it, he is liable to a heavy fine or imprisonment—but if a rich man break down the hedges of a poor man to do the same thing, merely for amusement, or mischief, no punishment awaits him.

XXI. If the labouring part of the people find their wages will not buy them bread, and consult together how to obtain more,—to fill out their bellies they are sent to prison; but, to prevent their over-feeding, all those who contribute to their maintenance are decreed to share the same fate.

XXII. If a man attempts to murder his wife, by cutting her throat and finding the wound not sufficiently large attempts to tear it open with his hands, he is imprisoned for a year. If he prints sentiments which the Minister himself had avowed the year before he is imprisoned for twice the time.

XXIII. If any industrious individual is indebted ten pounds he may be imprisoned for life; but if one, whose elevation of rank require him to be a pattern of virtue and piety, runs in debt 70,000 times as much, for the most vicious purposes, the nation is proud to pay the debt for him, and then, by way of reward, doubles his income.

XXIV. If a poor man takes a paltry bribe he is punished severely, but if a great man takes a bribe of a very considerable sum, one of the high-priests stands up in his place, takes from his pocket a bible, and proves, from holy writ, the pleasantness and propriety of the action.

XXV. These wonderful people suppose themselves the favoured children of Liberty, whilst the Minister possesses the power of imprisoning at will, and without even assigning a reason, any one of them whom he may dislike.

XXVI. Do unto others as you would they should do unto you is one of the first principles of the Bull-Landers, yet they yearly drag into slavery, and horrid sufferings, thousands of their fellow-creatures, because they are not of the same complexion with themselves.

XXVII. Liberty is, they say, the first of all sublunary blessings; life, they say, without it is a curse, and the world a prison, and the moment they learn any neighbouring nation is departing from Slavery to Freedom, they fly to arms to prevent it.

XXVIII. The Bull-Landers profess themselves the friends of Good Order, Religion, and Humanity, and accuse their neighbours, the Franks, of Anarchy, Atheism, and Cruelty. Now the Bull-Landers, after two years consultation, determine that to traffic in human flesh is justifiable, and the Franks, by destroying all the ships, employed for this infernal business, put an end to it at once.

XXIX.

XXIX. In the Island of Contradictions, Industry is universally extolled, and yet he that works most—always eats the least. The labourer starves whilst the idlest man in the society rolls in wasteful abundance; some receiving large sums for holding places in which they have nothing to do, and others receive still larger sums for holding no place at all.

XXX. The Island of Contradictions, from its situation, and from the nature of its productions, is particularly well calculated to reap the advantages resulting from Commerce. To extend their Commerce being their constant aim, and Peace furnishing them with the surest means of doing this—the are always engaged in some horrid and cruel war.

XXXI. Every considerate person knows that to render the inhabitants of Bull-Land a prosperous people it is necessary to be saving of the public money—Eighty thousands a year are therefore lavished on the family of the Favorite, hundreds of thousands in useless places and pensions, and millions on wicked, cruel, and unnecessary wars.

XXXII. The Patriots of Bull-Land make a point of crying out loudly against every thing which is done by those who are in place, as being likely to ruin the country, and, when they get into place themselves, they adopt exactly the same measures.

XXXIII. He who manifests a love for the people of Bull-Land is sure to be stiled an enemy to his country, whilst he who loads them with insult may reckon upon a pension.

XXXIV. The Bull Landers pay great sums of money to foreign princes with which those princes carry on war against the Bull-Landers in return.

XXXV. Nothing is more common in Bull-Land than to employ a Secretary at War, who is an adept at chopping logic, but knows not within 100,000 men of how many the army consists. A first Lord of the Admiralty who drinks and games all night and sleeps all day, and an Ambassador to a foreign people, who is entirely unacquainted with their language.

XXXVI. If any very important military expedition is to be attempted, instead of consulting their Generals, the whole expedition is planned by their first Law-Lord; instead of giving the execution to a Veteran, it is entrusted to a raw Youth; the musquets are sent without flints, and cannon balls are provided too large for the mouths of the cannon, and the ships, by which success is to be insured, are kept at home untill the enterprize has entirely failed.

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XXXVII. The inhabitants of Bull-Land value themselves much on the quantity of reason with which they are endowed, yet it is a common circumstance for several thousands to pass over to other lands, and engage in the most bloody wars, whilst, of the few who return, not one will be able to tell you the cause of the contest.

XXXVIII. When their goods are taken by their enemies they rejoice because they have more to make—The more of their merchant ships fall into the hands of the enemy the more prosperous they esteem themselves; when at the point of starving, they conceive they possess the greatest plenty; when the nation is most in debt, they declare it to be the most flourishing; and when they have the most abundant harvests, it is a fixed rule that bread and all the necessaries of life be sold at the highest price.

XXXIX. When the enemies of the Bull-Landers prove victorious, the Bull-Landers themselves exult, and testify their joy by the roaring of guns from the citadel, wasting many hundred weights of powder, whilst they have not enough to oppose their enemies. And when the vanquished armies of the Bull-Landers return they are received with songs of triumph, chanting, “ See the Conquering Heroes come.”

XL. When the Bull-Landers possess themselves of any of the enemies ships, for the express purpose of preserving them for those they call their right owners, they burn them to ashes, and yet, in a few days, we find those same ships at sea in fine condition, and in possession of those, to prevent whose obtaining them they were burnt to ashes.

XLI. Of the importance of the arts they are so well convinced that they have public institutions for their encouragement, but should any one obtain, of his own industry and ingenuity, the power of executing any particular art, he is liable to a very severe punishment, if he employ it to obtain a livelihood; and, on the contrary, should any one chuse it, he may, by purchase, be acknowledged and received, in the most solemn manner, as an adept in that art and mystery of which he is perfectly ignorant.

XLII. The Bull-Landers are such great friends to science that a society is established, under Royal Patronage, into which is admitted the learned of all nations. But should the wisest man in the world offer himself he would be rejected if he did not admit that Three was One, and One was Three.

XLIII. The Bull-Landers are most famous for their *secret EXPEDITIONS*, their mode of securing the necessary secrecy

secrecy and expedition is by informing all the world of their intentions, and delaying their exertions until the period is past for accomplishing the proposed end.

XIV. Not much less curious is their mode of distressing the enemies with whom they are at war, for when they conceive their resources to be exhausted, they contrive one expedition after another, by which they furnish them with all kinds of cloathing, weapons, ammunition and provisions, and this at a time when the Bull-Landers themselves are almost without the necessaries of life.

XLV. So fond of these absurd contradictions are the people of this Island that he is sure at least to be accused of High Treason who presumes even to recommend the putting an end to them by any species of Reform.

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